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United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects
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Note verbale dated 8 May 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations addressed to the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat transmitting the communiqué of the Rio Group on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects

The Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and has the honour to transmit, on behalf of the Rio Group, a communiqué from the Ministers for Foreign Affairs (see annex) which stresses the importance of the Conference to be held in July 2001 and reaffirms our approaches to this matter. The Communiqué of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Rio Group was adopted in Santiago, Chile, on 27 March 2001, on the occasion of the twentieth regular meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs.

In this connection, the Permanent Mission of Chile requests the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects to circulate the attached communiqué as a Conference document.

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Annex

Communiqué of the Rio Group concerning the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Rio Group, meeting in the city of Santiago, Chile, on 27 March 2001, on the occasion of the twentieth regular meeting, reaffirm the importance of achieving a common approach to the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects that would take into account the specific needs and experiences of individual regions, subregions and countries in the spirit of the Regional Preparatory Meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Brasilia in November 2000.

We especially value the efforts which led to the adoption within the Organization of American States of the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials and recommend its early ratification on the part of the signatory States.

We also draw attention to the efforts made at the first regular meeting of the Consultative Committee to that Convention, at which the Committee's rules of procedure and programme of work were adopted, to promote the commitments undertaken in the Convention.

We recall that the illicit trade in small arms in the region is mainly associated with drug trafficking, terrorism, transnational organized crime, mercenary activities and other criminal acts. Crime prevention must therefore be an integral part of the approach to combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

We reiterate our desire to participate actively in the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In addition, we express our belief that the United Nations Conference should adopt a political declaration and a global programme of action that would constitute an integral approach to the problem.

Santiago, Chile, 27 March 2001.